

Son of : Augustus Saint Gaudens

Saint Gaudens, Homer
[Carnegie Institute,
Pittsburgh, PA]

1927

CARNEGIE INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

HOMER SAINT GAUDENS
DIRECTOR

April 22, 1927

American Numismatic Society
Broadway between 155th and 156th Streets
New York, New York

Dear Sirs:

I am sending you a copy of a letter I have had from the Medallie Art Company and a carbon of my reply.

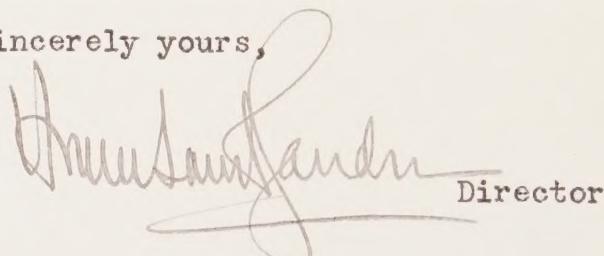
If Mr. Trees is correct in the fifth paragraph of his letter in saying that you credit the Franklin Medal to my father, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, I must ask you, in the interest of accuracy and justice, to correct the matter at once, both on the label and in the catalogue if you issue one.

As I have explained to Mr. Trees, this medal is primarily the work of my uncle, Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens, and my father always considered it so. It is unjust, therefore, both to Augustus Saint-Gaudens and to his brother, not to have the medal credited to Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens.

I should be grateful if you would let me know when the correction has been made.

Sincerely yours,

S:W


Homer Saint-Gaudens
Director

137 East Twenty-Ninth Street, New York

April 18th 1927

Mr. Homer Saint-Gaudens, Dir.,
Carnegie Institute
Department of Fine Arts,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mr. Saint-Gaudens:

We have your letter of the 7th relative to the Franklin 200th Anniversary medal, also, one this morning from Miss Ida Metz Reed in which she states she has been unable to locate the dies for the Franklin Medal.

Following the receipt of your letter we talked to Mr. James E. Fraser relative to this medal as we knew he had assisted your Father on it, as also did Mr. Hering. Mr. Fraser advised that what actually occurred was this:

Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens really created the designs for the medal and did a great deal of the work on the reverse and that he (Mr. Fraser) would say the reverse was really that of Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens, but, that the obverse side was entirely changed by Mr. Augustus Saint-Gaudens and that beyond question the portrait was his work, and that Mr. Augustus Saint-Gaudens supervised and saw the entire medal through to completion.

Mr. Henri Weil of this firm knows that Mr. Augustus Saint-Gaudens made four different trips to our workrooms here supervising the reproduction and seeing that the dies just suited him.

We are illustrating the medal in a booklet which we will have out shortly and are showing it as being done merely by "Saint-Gaudens". The American Numismatic Society of this city have a medal, also casts of the large models, which they exhibit and credit to Mr. Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Our booklet will not permit a lengthy description and we therefore feel the plan we have followed is the best.

In so far as we know, this medal was really the only one done by Mr. Saint-Gaudens. Of course he did the twenty dollar gold piece, the dies for which our Mr. Weil made for him at the Mint, but we believe this is the only medal he did.

You will recognize, I think, the rare opportunity that the possibility of an issuance of this medal to the American Art public affords if the dies can be found and an agreement reached with everyone as to such an issuance. Our Mr. Henri Weil is quite sure that these dies will be found in the U. S. Mint at Philadelphia. In whose hands the ownership rests I do not know. Have you any ideas as to the best way to go about making such a distribution possible and would you be willing to lend the project any support or recommendation?

We are willing to get out proper descriptive matter in the most dignified and best possible form, subject to the approval of anyone desired, and circularize such announcement or folder among art patrons and numismatists all over the United States and make the medals on any suitable basis, royalty or otherwise, if a possible plan can be obtained.

I wish to assure you that we have no financial interest in this. In fact we do not care whether we distribute these at a profit or not but we feel this would afford a great opportunity to do something really worth while for art in America. This would really amount to supplying a real work of art by the foremost sculptor of the United States to all those interested in art.

We would certainly appreciate hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

MEDALLIC ART COMPANY,

(Sd.) C. C. Trees

Secy-Treas.

C. C. Trees / CCG.

Copy to
Miss Ida Metz Reed, Sec.,
Estate of Augustus Saint-Gaudens,
Windsor, Vt.

April 22, 1927

Medallie Art Company
137 East 29th Street
New York, New York

Dear Sire:

I have your letter of April 18, but I cannot subscribe to the notion that the Franklin Medal was in any way at all the work of my father, Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

Even though he put a great deal of time and trouble into it, it was primarily the work of his brother, Louis Saint-Gaudens, whom my father assisted with his advice in this as in many other things. My father always considered it the work of his brother, and I should certainly respect his feeling in the matter, in justice both to him and to his brother.

I would suggest that you send all this correspondence to the wife of Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens, Mrs. Louis Saint-Gaudens of Windsor, Vermont, and take up with her the matter of issuing more medals if the dies can be found. I myself shall be glad to coöperate with her in any way that I can.

I am sorry to hear that the American Numismatic Society has been exhibiting this medal as the work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and I am writing them at once asking them to correct their label and catalogue.

I must ask you to do the same; that is, if you are showing this medal in your booklet, I must ask you to credit it to Mr. Louis Saint-Gaudens. I do not approve of your showing the medal as being done merely by "Saint-Gaudens", because that is equivalent to saying "Augustus Saint-Gaudens", as far as the general public is concerned.

If you are seeking a medal done by my father, you will remember that he did the George Washington Medal at the time of the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's inauguration as first President of the United States.

Sincerely yours,

S:W

April 27, 1927

Homer Saint-Gaudens, Esq.,
Director Carnegie Institute,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Sir:

Responding to yours of April 22nd, we have noted the facts which you have brought to our attention and we will alter the labels as you desire. This is, as you point out, desirable not only from the point of view of accuracy but from that of justice, and I thank you for having brought the matter to our attention.

Very truly yours,

Secretary

SPN:MB

CARNEGIE INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS
PITTSBURGH PENNSYLVANIA

HOMER SAINT-GAUDENS
DIRECTOR

April 29, 1927

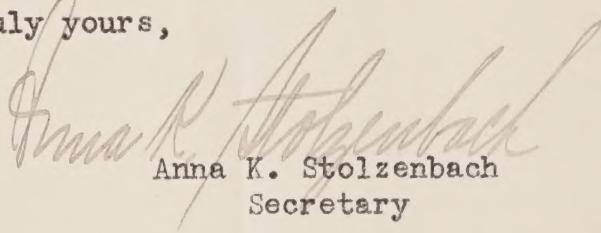
Mr. Sydney P. Noe, Secretary
The American Numismatic Society
Broadway between 155th and 156th Streets
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Noe:

In Mr. Saint-Gaudens' absence I write to thank you for
your letter of April 27.

He left for Europe last night, but I am sending him a
copy of your letter because I know it will please him.

Very truly yours,


Anna K. Stolzenbach
Secretary

S:W